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**DISSEMINATION CONTROL ABBREVIATIONS**

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Attachment to Z-13979/83

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NPIC/IEG (9/83)

16 SEPTEMBER 1983

**UNUSUAL AIR DEFENSE ACTIVITY  
SANDINO AIRFIELD, NICARAGUA (SWN)**

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1. **SIGNIFICANCE:** UNUSUAL AIR DEFENSE ACTIVITY, INVOLVING NEWLY CONFIRMED 37MM (M 1939) ANTIAIRCRAFT ARTILLERY (AAA) WEAPONS, WAS OBSERVED AT SANDINO AIRFIELD. (SWN)

2. **REMARKS:** THREE BATTERIES EACH WITH SIX 37MM (M 1939) AAA GUNS WERE FIELD DEPLOYED ALONG THE SOUTH SIDE OF THE RUNWAY AT SANDINO AIRFIELD ON [REDACTED] THIS IS THE FIRST IMAGERY CONFIRMATION OF 37MM (M 1939) AAA IN NICARAGUA. TWO OF THESE BATTERIES WERE NEWLY DEPLOYED [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] AND THE THIRD BATTERY HAD BEEN DEPLOYED [REDACTED] A CUBAN-STYLE TENT WAS ERECTED NEAR EACH OF TWO OF THE 37MM AAA BATTERIES. TENTS ARE RARELY SEEN WITH MILITARY DEPLOYMENTS IN NICARAGUA. (SWN)

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[REDACTED] THE DAY ON WHICH ALL THREE OF THE 37MM BATTERIES WERE FIRST NOTED, A SMALL AIRCRAFT WAS USED BY ANTI-SANDINISTA REBELS IN AN ATTACK ON SANDINO AIRFIELD. ANTIAIRCRAFT ARTILLERY WAS REPORTEDLY USED IN DEFENSE OF THE AIRFIELD AND WAS REPORTED TO BE RESPONSIBLE FOR DOWNING THE ATTACKING PLANE. THE UNUSUAL DEPLOYMENT OF 37MM AAA JUST BEFORE [REDACTED] ATTACK, AND THE SUBSEQUENT DEPARTURE OF THIS EQUIPMENT AFTER THE ATTACK, MAY INDICATE THAT NICARAGUAN DEFENSE FORCES WERE ALERTED TO THE IMPENDING AIR ATTACK. NO OTHER ACTIVITY INDICATING A POSSIBLE AIR DEFENSE ALERT, INCLUDING THE DISPERSAL OF AIRCRAFT, WAS OBSERVED. THIS ACTIVITY COULD ALSO REPRESENT INCREASED AIR DEFENSE TRAINING. (SWN)

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SANDINO AIRFIELD, 5 NM EAST OF MANAGUA, SERVES AS THE HEADQUARTERS FOR THE SANDINISTA AIR FORCE AND IS THE ONLY INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT IN NICARAGUA. (SWN)

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3. [REDACTED] COORDINATES 12-08-28N 086-10-07W (S)

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